Kerala from 2nd – 6th August 2009 for an on-the-spot assessment of damage caused by heavy rains and floods during July, 2009 and has submitted its report. As per the report of the IMCT, 33 human lives were lost; 177 cattle perished; 39233 ha. of cropped area damaged, 13926 houses affected and also damage to infrastructure under various sectors. The IMCT recommended an assistance of Rs. 116.90 crore from National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) and Rs. 1.85 crore from Special Component of Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP). The High Level Committee (HLC), based on the assessment of the IMCT, recommendations of the Inter-Ministerial Group thereon and extant items and norms of assistance under Calamity Relief Fund (CRF), approved (i) an amount of Rs. 61.36 crore from NCCF subject to the adjustment of 75% of balance available in the CRF account of the State for the instant calamity and (ii) Rs. 1.85 crore from Special Component of ARWSP for repair of damaged drinking water supply works.

As per the Scheme of CRF/NCCF, a CRF has been constituted for each State to ensure ready availability of funds with the States to undertake rescue and relief operations in the wake of identified natural calamities. Additional financial assistance is also provided from NCCF when a calamity is of a severe nature and the funds in the CRF account are inadequate for relief operations. The corpus of CRF is contributed between the Government of India and the States in the ratio of 75:25. An amount of Rs. 103.91 crore has been allocated to the State in CRF for the year 2009-10 consisting of Rs. 77.93 crore as Central contribution and Rs. 25.98 crore as State contribution. Both the instalments of Central share of CRF amounting to Rs. 77.93 crore have been released to the State Government.

Spurt in prices of gold

*396. SHRI ISHWAR SINGH:
SHRI N.K. SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that there is spurt in prices of gold in the country in the last few months;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the import policy of gold needs further changes in view of spurt in prices of gold; and

(d) if so, the steps Government proposes to take to bring down the prices of gold in the country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Increase in prices of gold in the International market, seasonal demand, investment buying etc., are some of the major factors known to affect the prices of gold.

(c) and (d) The gold prices are broadly driven by the international gold prices. Government has minimal control over them.

Providing protection to workers in unorganized sector

*397. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Unorganized Workers Social Security Act, 2008 was enacted to provide social security to the workers in the unorganized sector;

(b) if so, whether Government has now decided to constitute a sub-committee on unorganized sector;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the workers in the unorganized sector remain unprotected inspite of enactment of the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, 2008; and

(e) if so, the other steps Government proposes to take to provide adequate protection to workers in the unorganized sector?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE): (a) to (e) The Government has enacted the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008. The Act provides for constitution for National Social Security Board which shall recommend formulation of social security schemes *viz.* life and disability cover, health and maternity benefits, old age protection and any other benefit as may be determined by the Central Government. The schemes as are listed in Schedule-I of the Act are already in operation. These schemes provide social security cover to some segments of unorganized workers. As mandated under the Act, the Government has also constituted the National Social Security Board under the Chairmanship of Minister of Labour and Employment. The Board held its first meeting on 23.9.2009. Consequent to a decision taken in the meeting, a tripartite Sub-Committee consisting of representatives of workers, employers and civil society has been constituted to: (i) consider and recommend ways and means to extend existing social security schemes like RSBY, to other segments of unorganized workers (ii) examine and suggest other social security schemes for unorganized workers, including the mechanism for implementation and the funding thereof (iii) any other suggestion regarding providing social security to unorganized workers. The Sub-Committee has already met twice. The recommendations of the Sub-Committee would be placed before the National Social Security Board.

Ban on online lotteries

*398 SHRI ABDUL WAHAB PEEVEE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Kerala Government has sought a ban on online lotteries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and